



PICTURE: IAN RUTHERFORD

↑ Gok Wan (centre) and Peter Ferguson with managing director Natalie Sturge in Edinburgh

Gok Wan cuts a dash with Scots events firm

● New venture eyes growth with corporate and fashion focus

@therealgokwan

By EMMA NEWLANDS

TV presenter and fashion expert Gok Wan is premiering in the corporate events world after joining forces with Edinburgh-based entrepreneur Peter Ferguson to launch a new venture.

The duo have teamed up to create Beautiful Events and Productions, which aims to provide a high-end, glamorous event-management service to businesses, hotels, networking events and awards ceremonies.

Wan – famous for TV shows such as *How To Look Good Naked* – told *The Scotsman*: “It’s a huge departure from most things I’ve ever done, especially going into business with somebody else.”

The move comes after he and Ferguson – partners



NEW VENTURE

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in the new business – decided to combine their events businesses.

Wan said the launch comes after about 12 months of beta testing, “to make sure we’ve got the right audience ready for us, that we’re all prepared to take on the right contracts”.

The venture has already worked with Microsoft, The Scottish Hotel Awards, The Celebration of Sports Awards and The Preston Fashion Festival.

Wan said he has attended a “huge amount” of events varying from multimillion-pound galas to intimate fundraisers and beyond, and “you get to see the mechanics of the business – you get to know essentially what’s a really good event and what’s a bad one”.

He also admitted to concerns about firms cutting back on budgets, but believes that while the economic backdrop remains uncertain, there are still excellent opportunities for business.

Wan also stressed that he grew up around a small family firm – a restaurant – and saw the importance of customer service, always reinventing your brand and, essentially, being cost-viable.

The new firm will operate across the UK with Scotland key, where it has a “huge market base” – and Wan sees potential to cover various locations. Overseas work is also in its sights. Events expert Ferguson, who has led PDF Productions for over a decade and oversees the production side of the new firm, said: “We will be a great addition to the events market in Scotland.”

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DJ Laing makes return

By SCOTT REID

Carnoustie-based DJ Laing Group has reported a swing back to tax profit for its civil engineering, housebuilding and recycling operations.

The firm posted a full-year pre-tax profit of £628,000 compared with a loss of £88,000 in the previous 12 months, noting that the rebound had resulted from a “number of key strategic changes” made across its operational activities over the last two years.

In October 2015, the waste processing operations at Gourdie, Dundee, were sold to NWH Group, followed by the sale of the wood processing activities at Petterden, also in Dundee, in May 2017.

The remaining activities within the recycling operations will complement the other areas of the group’s activities, Laing added, allowing the management to focus on its “core strength areas”.

Within the company’s civil engineering division, a decision was made to reduce the

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